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To Miss E Alexander Most Love from the Author

MEMORIES
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

MARY A. BUCHAM

Author's Edition
WILLIAM BRIGGS
TORONTO
1905

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MEMORIES

MEMORIES.

How pleasant to visit our birthplace,
  Where once, as a merry wee child,
We gathered the cowslips and daisies,
  That grew on the common and wild;
We looked at each tree in the meadow,
  The brook at the foot of the hill,
And listened to catch the soft murmur
  Of each little ripple and rill.

It seemed as though each feathered songster
  A welcome to us did declare;
The songs were both sweeter and louder
  Than we'd heard for many a year.
We stood on the bridge o'er the river,
  Where oft, when a child, with a line
We caught speckled beauties and minnows,
  At evening to pass away time.

These all were the same now as ever,
As merry with time rolling on;
All nature with us was rejoicing
To welcome us back to our home.

We walked on the streets of the village—
No more village, but now a great town,
With all the new modern improvements—
Where in childhood to every one known;
How we looked for familiar faces,
All seemed strangers that passed us by,
Except, now and then, we would fancy,
A look or a glance from an eye,
Would bring back the old-time memories,
With a welcome and clasp of the hand;
We forgot how the years they had numbered,
Since last we had met on the strand.

We went to the church where we worshipped,
And bowed down our head in the prayer.
How few of companions or schoolmates
We saw midst the worshippers there;
We went to the door of the cottage,
To list for the welcome "Come in,"
But now all was silent and strangers
Had changed once our home and the scene.

CHRISTMAS.

Lo! Christmas now again is here,
The happiest day of all the year,
When parents, friends and children meet,
And with "A Merry Christmas" greet.
How many feet adown the stair were tripping ere daylight
To where the stockings in a row were hung with joy last night!
Now they are full and brimming o'er
With precious gifts from every store;
There are books, dolls, Noah's arks and drums,
And oh, such monstrous sugar plums!

Then up to mamma's room their little steps they bent,
And cried, "Dear mamma, do look here, what Santa Claus has sent."
And mamma looked on with loving eyes,
And smiled at every glad surprise.
"And papa dear, why don't you look?
He's brought me such a pretty book;
It's all about a little boy
Who brought glad tidings of great joy,

About a star in Bethehem
Which had been seen by some wise men;
About some shepherds with their flocks,
Who heard, while wandering 'mongst the rocks,
Some angels singing in the sky,
" Glory, glory to God on high!"

Yes, that is why our Christmas dear
Has always brought us so much cheer
Because the Christ-child now in heaven,
He on this day to us was given,
That we through Him, if we believe,
Redemption through His blood receive.
And now from ma to baby small,
A " Merry Christmas " to you all.
We pray as years do swiftly go
We may more like the Christ-child grow,
And though on earth we must be riven,
We all shall meet at home in heaven.

TO THE NEW YEAR.

New Year's bells! New Year's bells!
How merrily they chime,
Telling all our nations, people,
Swiftly passes time.
Oh! the many wondrous stories
Of the year just past and gone;
Gone for ever with its troubles,
Joys and sorrows to its doom.

Tell us, Cherub, are you happy?
Are you not afraid to try
With your puny arms to carry
All the schemes which men supply?
With your little face so tender,
And your eyes so sparkling blue;—
Ah! I tremble when I think how
You'll grow old and feeble, too.

But, take courage! God is with you;
He will guide your little craft;
He's the helper of the helpless,
And the helm will take, and aft,

When you're storm-tossed o'er the billows
And the sea is lashed to foam,
He will gently lift you forward,
With a kindness all His own.

Now, we ask you kindly, New Year,
As your days are passing by,
To deal gently with the erring;
Help them upward to the sky.
So, when you are old and feeble,
Tired and weary with the strife,
We will thank our Heavenly Father
For another year of life.

THE QUEEN AND THE MAIDEN.

(On the death of Sir John Thompson.)

To our good and kind Victoria,
To our noble, gracious Queen,
We would render earthly homage,
All our loyalty supreme.

. . . . . .

We will peep in Windsor Castle,
Far across the dark blue sea:
Lords and ladies there are seated
And the time ran merrily,
There one full of hope and vigor,
From this Canada of ours,
With a mind so full of wisdom,
Went to plead our country's cause.
"Ah! how foolish is my weakness!"
To his friends he thus replies.
When suddenly God called him
To his home beyond the skies.

. . . . . .

The scene is changed. Within the hall
We now behold a maiden fair:

She stands and weeps so sad and lonely—
  But our Queen has entered there.
"He's my father—how I loved him,"
  Said the maiden o'er the bier;
Tho' his face was cold and rigid,
  Still, the look of love was there.
"Little thought I, noble lady,
  As we crossed the ocean wave,
That my kind and loving father
  Was preparing for his grave."

Then our loving Queen Victoria,
  While her tears were falling fast,
Took the maiden, kindly kissed her,
  On both cheeks she gently pressed
Tho' on her brow a royal crown
  And diadem of lustre rare,
Her sceptred hand, it mattered not,—
  Beneath, a mother's heart was there
Ne'er such Christlike condescension,
  Ne'er such goodness ever seen,
As Queen to kiss a humble maiden,
  We pray: God bless our gracious Queen,
    Send her victorious,
    Happy and glorious,
    Long to reign over us,
    God save our Queen.

December 29th, 1904.

REVERIE OF A STONE MAN.

(Suggested by stone figure at Bank of Montreal, corner of Yonge and Front Streets, Toronto.)

I WAS walking home at midnight,
The street was dark and drear,
The travellers well nigh gone home
And only a stray one near
I passed a large stone building,
And a great stone man stood there:
His face was stern and motionless,
His eyes appeared to glare.

I beckoned to him with my hands,
And asked the reason why
He looked so stern and cold and grieved
Amidst the passers-by.
And now I saw great teardrops
Fall from his stony eyes,
Which made me wonder—I drew near,
When, much to my surprise,

He spoke, held out his hand, and said:
"Friend, this is a bank, you know;
I have borne its weight for many a year,
But to such a tale of woe
I listened: A rich man had gone
Into the bank and told
How a son he had—an only son—
And he was one year old.

"'Now, what am I to do?' quoth he,
'It seems so hard, indeed;
With food and clothing to provide,
I sure shall be in need;
So many years I'll have to keep
From danger and from harm.
My bank-books—they will suffer, too,
Which causes me alarm.'

"Then my stone eyes, they shed stone tears
Of sympathy for the boy,
Whose father with his thousands all
Still had so little joy.
I said: 'Alas! and can it be
The world is all like this—
So hard, so cold, so comfortless,
And naught of joy or bliss.'

. . . . . .

"But now another man went in,
And he was poor, 'twas said.

I scanned his face most eagerly,
Knowing that for daily bread
He had to work from morn till night,
With sweat upon his brow;
He labored hard and murmured not,
But seemed contented now.

"'Sir, I, too, have a little son;
But still, by stint and care,
We've saved a hundred by the way,
And hope to make it more.
It is not much, as you will say,
To bring to this rich bank,
And when I saw your solemn face
My heart within me sank.

"'But I am very thankful, sir,
God does His mercies share;
My son may be a rich man yet,
If reared, with kindly care,
To trust in God, serve Him aright,
And His commands obey,
Which always does a blessing bring
To those who work and pray.'

"So now, kind friend, I've told you why
I'm sorrowful and grieve;
The rich man trusts to gold alone,
The poor in God believe."

THE BRAKESMAN'S STORY.

"Do you see those little children?"
Said a brakesman on a train,
As we passed a humble cottage
Near the station on our line.

"Yes," I answered, glancing quickly;
"There are three—I see them now,
With their mother bending o'er them,
While their little heads they bow."

"They are mine, sir—aren't they lovely?
Every evening, when 'tis eight,
They gently kneel down at the window,
Saying, 'Please God, papa don't be late.'

"That's the time our train will pass, sir,
And I see them kneeling there,
With their mother bending o'er them,
Listening to their evening prayer.

"So, now, when I'm sorely tempted,
And my comrades bid me come,

I can see their little faces
Asking papa to come home.

"Lest they should be disappointed,
And their mother all alone,
I can turn, 'midst comrades' laughter,
To my humble cottage home."

THE NEWSBOY'S SONG.

THE night was cold, and drizzly rain
Was falling, while the street
Looked quite deserted, save a few
Stragglers struggling through the sleet,

Homeward bound, where cosy fires
And smiling faces beckoned on,
Rewarding all their lone discomfort
With kind caresses, more anon.

The wind was blowing through the trees,
It moaned and groaned a wail,
As though some spirit, seeking rest,
Called loudly for a goal.

I travelled on, though pondering well
Each subject for a thought,
When suddenly a newsboy's call—
"Papers, sir; evening papers, sir"—the cry had made me start.

THE NEWSBOY'S SONG

I listened to the cheerful tone,
Though slender was the form,
His feet were bare, his clothes were worn,—
When all at once a song
Burst from his lips:

"What a friend we have in Jesus!"
Ah, I hear the echo still;
There's a secret in his bosom,
How it makes his heart to thrill.

What though tired, ragged, lonely,
Still a friend he has in need;
He's the Father of the fatherless,
Jesus is a friend indeed.

I no more was sad, dejected,
But took courage from the song;—
We, too, have a friend in Jesus,
Makes us happy all day long.

STORY OF A LIFE.

A SQUIRE came from Old England's shore,
He was of great renown,
And brought his wife and family
To a small Canadian town.
The villagers were all agog
With wonder and surprise,
That one so rich, with noble name,
Should choose a town its size.

He built a mansion for his home,
Large rooms and stately halls;
A retinue of servants kept
To answer fancy's calls.
His wife she was of queenly grace;
His children, one and all,
Were fair and good to look upon,
Though they were only small.

And now my story we will change—
A school-room now we see,
Scholars at work with slates and books,
As busy as can be.

The morn was bright and beautiful,
  The May-flowers could be seen;
Sweet buttercups and daisies white,
  With robins on the wing.

The school-marm sat in regal state
  Upon a straight-backed chair,
Her cap so neat, her form so straight,
  No smile or whispering there,
When suddenly we hear a sound
  Of horses' pattering feet,—
Coachman and carriage, with a maid
  Are hastening down the street.

She enters now our school-room door,
  The teacher bids us rise,
And welcome with a gracious air
  Our heroine with surprise.
A nobler form, a face more sweet,
  Her brown eyes glistening bright—
We stood amazed in wonderment,
  Her beauty charmed our sight.

She smiled a sweet and languid smile:
  Young Cupid with his bow
And arrows must have pierced our hearts,
  So subservient were we now.

The maid, a daughter of the squire,
Brought up in ease and pride;
In luxury's lap her cup of joy
Seemed ever near her side.

The squire was proud, as fathers are,
Of daughter so refined;
And this his youngest child, 'twas said,
Most suited to his mind.
He gave large balls in stately halls,
And invited many guests;
In country round there ne'er was found
Such elaborate wine-spread feasts.

His horses were the very best
Our country could afford;
With jockeys dressed they did their best
To keep their own record.
And ofttimes with his horses fleet
The hounds would keep at bay;
The fox would chase and run apace,
The brush our heroine gay.

Would ride all hunters thus to pass,
And wave her trophy high
In triumph o'er her queenly head,
And never breathe a sigh.

And thus time passed so merrily—
No thought of trouble came;
And still they revelled on in mirth—
No fear of want or shame.

So thus our heroine passed each day
In childlike innocence;
With wealth and beauty held her sway,
Nor thought to give offence.
Her face became more beautiful,
Her form more queenly now;
Her dress of fabrics rich and rare,
So placid is her brow.

You could not help but love her,
So winsome and so fair;
Her father's pride, her mother's joy—
True womanhood was there.
Of suitors she had many,
For who with pride and wealth
But have their slaves, their suitors all,
For glory, rank, or pelf.

But one, he was of quiet mien,
So dignified, we're sure
Our heroine will accept his hand,
His heart for evermore.

The squire seemed happy with the choice
His daughter fair had made;
A lawyer's wife she now would be,
And thus, and thus, he said.

So now the wedding bells do ring,
Right merrily they peal,
As to the church they both repair
And at the altar kneel.
Methinks I see her lovely face
Beneath the bridal veil,
Her husband proud—did e'er a crowd
More sympathetic feel?

The guests looked on in glad delight,
The organ rolled again,
The priest so earnestly did speak—
"Till death us part. Amen."
But joy and mirth on every side
Did follow in the van;
The carriages so gaily trimmed
Do now make up the train.

And now the feast—a wedding feast,
Such as the squire would give—
Of richest viands and costliest wines
His cellars to relieve.

Ah wine, this wine, a mocker is;
Strong drink is raging, too;
It biteth like an adder quick,
Will pierce to cut in two.

No thought of God, or Christ, or Heaven,
Her parents thus had given;
'Twas riches, fashion, pleasure, pride,—
All other things forbidden.
And thus she leaves her father's home
Of pleasure and of wine,
A perfumed, fragile little flower
Cast on the Sea of Time.

Her husband was a moral man,
His parents, good and kind,
Had trained in ways of righteousness,
And all things good inclined.
And he was rich, his house and grounds
Of many acres o'er;
With grassy plots and flowering shrubs,
What happiness in store.

And they had friends, so many friends,
Their hospitable board
Was spread with dainties, fruits and flowers
The country could afford.

But some friends are like butterflies,
In sunshine flutter round;
Or busy bees that gather sweets,—
In winter ne'er are found.

And so the time passed gaily in,
Flitting from bower to bower;
Her husband from his books and briefs
Ne'er wasted scarce an hour.
Now faith, it is a mighty power,
Encircling all the world;
With some it is a broken reed
Into a chasm hurled.

The tempter came—'twas in the wine
He did a tale unfold—
Dame Rumor listened, declared 'twas true,
And thus became more bold.
Our heroine's children now had grown—
Four bright and handsome boys,
With a tiny little sister sweet
To add to all their joys.

Her husband, grave and studious,
His mind with learning stored,
Ne'er listened to Dame Rumor's tales—
In fact, he thought she bored;

Each morning, with a joyful heart,
  Set forth his life to prove.
Train up a child as he should go,
  Nor let a mother's love

Withhold correction from the child—
  'Tis said in Holy Writ,
That he will walk in Wisdom's way,
  Nor when old depart from it.
A virtuous woman who can find,
  Above rubies is her price;
Her husband's heart doth safely trust,
  Her children seek advice.

But now my story I must tell,
  How 'twas the tempter came,
The wine cup, with the sparkling wine
  For this, her parents' blame,
She now neglects her duties all,
  Her children gaze with fear;
No mother now will sooth their brow,
  Or wipe away a tear.

And so things went from bad to worse,
  Her husband tried in vain
To win her back to righteousness—
  This was his noble aim.

Alas! 'twas for his children's sake
He drove her from the door
And sought the courts for justice now—
Have pity, we implore.

Her father's home received her still—
How wondrous to relate;
She left a loving, winsome bride—
Repentance comes too late.

. . . . . .

Some years have passed, 'tis Christmas-tide,
And merry bells do chime;
The table spread within the hall,
As in the olden time.
But hark! We hear some sleigh-bells ring,
A coachman, with his steed,
Comes dashing onward through the snow—
What means his hastening speed?

Our heroine of the past alights,
Knocks gently at the door;
The servant stands aghast, amazed—
She falls fainting on the floor.
"Oh! God of mercy, hear my prayer,"
On bended knees she cries;
"My children once their mother loved"
The master stern replies:

"Woman, begone! I know you not.
You crushed the tender flower
Of love I carried in my breast;
'Tis now beyond my power
To gather up the scattered leaves
Upon the sea of Time
The waves have tossed and billows lashed
Upon the rocks sublime.

"You come to me at Christmas-tide—
List! hear the chiming bell.
It tells of joy and happiness,—
To me a funeral knell
Of happy days now past and gone,
Of children's mirthful glee;
A mother's joy, a father's pride,
Now lost for aye and aye."

And thus she left her home again,
Sad, weary, and forlorn;
Our once bright, happy heroine,
Now never to return.
Ah wine, this wine, a mocker is;
Strong drink is raging, too;
It biteth like an adder quick,
Will pierce to cut in two.

. . . . . .

Her parents dead, she still has wealth,
And so to foreign climes
She seeks a balm for all her wounds
With which her heart repines.
One evening—'tis the twilight hour—
A train comes thundering past;
It stops quite near a wayside inn—
Yes, she's returned at last.

We see a casket, deeply draped,
And one attendant near,
And with a motley, gathering crowd
He helps to place the bier.
Within a room—this wayside inn,
Her home the last on earth—
She rests all night alone, alone,
'Mid sounds of ribald mirth.

Ah, truth more strange than fiction is!
Was e'er a sadder fate
Of one so loved and beautiful?—
'Tis truth I now relate.
To-morrow, ere the sun is high,
We see a funeral train
Pass to the last long resting-place
Of our loved heroine.

THE WHIPPOORWILL.

I wandered away through the meadow
To list to the whippoorwill's song;
And wondered if now he was angry,
Or what it was he had done wrong.

The katydids, blackbirds and robins
Seemed joyous, and trilled with delight;
Each seeming to vie with the other
To bid me a welcome at sight.

The sun it was low in the heaven,
I sauntered on there still alone,
Only thinking how happy they all were,
Except whippoorwill the only one.

I asked him to tell me the reason
The woodpecker knocked on a tree,
And told all the songsters to listen
While a secret he'd whisper to me.

You know evening's the time for all lovers
To call on their mates in the wood;
Poor whippoorwill, too, once a mate had,
And she was most lovely and good.

She chirruped her love-song so sweet
And laughed at the will-o'-the-wisp;
Her dignified black-headed lover
Ne'er thought any harm of a guest.

One evening—'twas spring time, 'tis said—
He left her alone in the nest,
When suddenly down flew a cuckoo,
And he was in search of a feast.

He bowed with a most solemn air
And poked in his long pointed bill,
Saying, "Madam, dear madam, good evening;
Your husband I met on the hill.

"He bade me to tell you to meet him
Quite up on the mountain so high;
He there has a question to ask you,
And now I will bid you good-bye."

So away to her lover she hastened,
Ne'er thinking her birdies to harm;

But the cuckoo he winked and he cuckooed,
And jumped in the nest now so warm.

Mister Cuckoo he ate up the bird's eggs,
Then sat himself down for a rest,
When who should fly home there together
But the whippoorwills back to their nest.

They jumped on the bough very gently,
Just to peep at their four little eggs,
When they saw such black eyes and a bill, too—
"You monster!"—for mercy he begs.

"Mister Whippoorwill, 'twas really your sweetheart
Who called to me when passing by;
Her voice was so sweet and her accents so low,
I could but politely comply."

Now this made Mister Whippoorwill angry,
And jealous and cross, as you know,
And he pecked out her eyes and her feathers,
Till she fell down exhausted below.

Then she died broken-hearted, poor birdie;
All the birds in the forest they mourned,

And they never once spoke to the cuckoo,
  And the whippoorwill also they scorned.

Now a council they held there together,
  And told how the cuckoo deceived;
Mister Whippoorwill listened in anguish,
  His sweetheart he had not believed.

So now he sits there in the evening,
  So mournful and sad with remorse,
Saying, "Whippoorwill, whippoorwill," ever;
  "I'm sorry, I'm sorry; oh, yes!"

THE SEXTON'S STORY.

I ENTERED the great cathedral,
The church with its gilded tower;
We sauntered up into the chancel,
The chimes were striking the hour
Of mid-day, but not a sound
From the pulpit, the pew, or the choir—
'Twas only a long, deep silence
Which seemed like an omen to fear.

But presently down came the sexton,
His voice it was cheerful and loud:
"What seek ye, my friends; can I help you?"
Said he, approaching, and bowed.
We asked him then of the sleepers
Under the marble slab,
Of the memoriams on the walls hung
Of the babes which the angels guard.

We gazed at the beautiful windows,
All colored with blue, white, and red,
With pictures of Christ, the dear Saviour,—
But now there was something he said.

He showed us a pew in the corner—
'Twas far away back at the door—
"A man has kneeled year after year there;
By his dress I should think he was poor.

"But he comes here to worship each Sabbath,
And fervently bows in the prayer;
I wonder when God sends His message,
If we'll find him still kneeling there.
He never has told us his story,
But surely—we know it is true—
He has told it to God and his Saviour,
To whom we commit him. Adieu."

THE TWO BEGGARS.

A Legend.

'Tis said two beggars long ago
Set out to make a living,
So each to each the other gave
A motto thus,—one saying,
"Best is the man the people honor";
Loudly shouted he,
"'Tis wonderful with what respect
The people honor me."

The other thought of royalty,
And so, to please a whim,
He called aloud: "Blessed is the man
Who honoreth the king."
They travelled on from day to day,
And to each door went begging;
The one he shouted for the king,
The other the people pleading.

The king he chanced to pass them by,
And heard the two men shouting;

He asked his courtiers one and all—
  Their motive he was doubting.
So, on the homeward journey,
  He, too, made up a plan
To send a large plum pudding to
  The king's own beggar man.

But it was very hard indeed—
  Too hard for him to eat—
And heavy for his shoulders,
  So on the road he sat.
His friend, the people's beggar, came,
  Looked at him with surprise;
The king's own beggar said, "Take this,
  And keep it for a prize.

"The king does think a beggar man
  Must eat without a choice,
So you may take his pudding now;
  I ne'er will eat a slice."
This beggar man so thankful was
  He went to work with will
To carry the pudding home with him,
  His hungry mouth to fill.

He tried and tried the crust to break—
  "'Tis wonderful," quoth he,

"A king should have such puddings made,
Fit only for the sea.
But I'm determined now to find
The middle; perhaps the fruit
Has swollen, and the outward crust
Is hard, there is no doubt."

He cut a niche, put in a wedge,
His object thus to gain,
When, oh! how much surprised was he—
'Twas filled with golden coin.
Now a beggar man no more he was,
But a man of wealth and fame;
The people truly honored him,
The king enquired his name.

His comrade went before the king,
Who, angry with him, said:
"You shall go begging all your days,
And thus shall earn your bread."
He, humbled now from pure chagrin,
Shouted, "Long live the king!
And now a lesson I have learned:
I must work if I would win."

CHRISTMAS.

Tell your children it is Christmas,
Happiest day of all the year;
When we call our friends together,
Bid them welcome, Christmas cheer.
Tell them of the Baby Jesus,
How he came to earth this day,
How they found Him in a manger,
Born in Bethlehem, far away.

Tell them of the shepherds watching
Flocks on mountain and in glen,
Heard the angels singing, "Glory,
Peace on earth, good-will to men."
How the wise men came to Herod,
Saying, "We have seen His star,
And have come to do Him homage,
Bringing frankincense and myrrh."

How King Herod sought to slay Him,
And sent forth a sad decree:
"Kill all children under two years;
This ye do, and honor me."

But God kindly said to Joseph,
In a dream at dark midnight,
"Take the Babe to Egypt yonder;
I'll protect you in your flight."

How God called him back to Nazareth
There to toil with saw and plane;
There the good and holy Jesus
Sought a livelihood to gain.
Of His visit to the temple—
He was twelve years old, 'tis said—
How he sat with scribes and learned men,
Talking much of living bread.

How upon the homeward journey
Mary missed Him, sought in vain;
To the temple she ran quickly,
Found Him listening there again.
"Hasten, hasten, child, we're waiting!
Come, our friends are far away."
"Wist ye not, my father's business
Led me thus long to delay."

Tell them all the wondrous story,
How the child to manhood grew,
He, who was all grace and glory,
Sent to earth for me and you.

Tell, oh, tell them, how He loved us,
How He gave His life to save
Us, who needed His salvation,
Gained a victory o'er the grave.

This is why we love our Christmas,
Happiest day of all the year;
All because the Baby Jesus
Came to earth our hearts to cheer.

POOR FANNY.

I KNEW a little maiden—
'Twas long, long years ago;
She dwelt upon the hillside,
In a cottage near a grove.

She was an only daughter—
Or child, I should have said—
Her parents were industrious,
And worked for daily bread.

Upon the farm and quite content
They seemed each day to be;
The child was fair and beautiful
They fondled on their knee.

They often talked of Fanny,
For so her name was called,
And asked God's guidance every day,
From sin to be enthralled.

She was her father's pride and joy,
  Her mother's only care,
And thus the three in unity,
  Did many blessings share.

So all through merry childhood
  She romped upon the green,
Or plucked buttercups and daisies,
  Sweet harbingers of spring.

She learned to ride the fleetest steeds,
  And ofttimes could be seen,
Her golden locks chased by the wind,
  O'er hillside and through glen.

So thus from child to maidenhood
  Old Time ran swiftly on;
Her life it seemed all sunshine,
  With not a care or frown.

Her father, too, some wealth had gained—
  A mansion now stands near
Where once the humble cottage reared
  Its door of welcome there.

And now some suitors for her hand
  Came sauntering one by one;
Now one was rich and others fair,
  But still she favored none.

At last one came, so good and kind,
To her he seemed to be
A paragon of perfection,
So bland and suave was he.

He could drive the swiftest horses,
He could row the fastest boat,
He could challenge them at cricket,
He could turn them all about.

Poor Fanny was bewildered,
She ne'er had seen before
One nearly half so clever,
And with such wit in store.

And oh, he was so handsome,
His carriage was complete;
But her father, he was dubious;
Her mother, she would greet

In kindness, but still a sigh
Of pent-up fear and pride,
That one so rich and handsome
Should seek her for his bride.

"But, ah," he says, "dear lady,
True love did ne'er run smooth;
Your daughter I will cherish much,
And all her troubles soothe.

"Our marriage will be happy,
And you will thus approve
The choice your darling will have made,
All others far above."

And thus he pleaded now his cause
In language strong and bold;
Her parents listened,—wondering why
Their child they did withhold.

At last the marriage was arranged,
'Twas with great pomp and show;
The bells did ring, the choir boys sing,
The bride looked sweet, I trow.

And soon another house was seen
Upon the farm near by;
The furniture was all unique
As city could supply.

Her parents thought 'twas only right
To shield from every care
The child they loved so fondly both;
Their wealth with them should share.

And now all things ran merrily,
As wedding bells they went;
'Twas fashion's bower, so every hour
In gaiety was spent.

Two children came—such blessedness
Her cup of joy ran o'er;
Did e'er a mother love her babes,
Or grandsires thus adore!

Alas! one morning, all too soon,
Poor Fanny sought in vain;
Her pride, her joy, her happiness,
Would ne'er return again.

At midnight he had stolen forth,
His deeds too well were known,
And left his wife quite penniless,
His babes and all forlorn.

Her father, too, had spent his all
To try his child to save,
When suddenly he drooped and died,
To fill a pauper's grave.

Poor Fanny searched both far and near,
Some tidings thus to gain
Of him she loved so tenderly—
Alas! it all seemed vain.

She left her home, she knew not where
Her weary steps to guide;
Still God is good to hear our prayer,
Nor will He always chide.

Now in a far-off city
She tried by stint and care
To earn with needlework the bread
Her mother, too, must share.

For, old and blind, she gropes the way
From out the tenement door;
Her feeble step, her face so sad—
Take pity, we implore.

Thus time wore on. Poor Fanny tried
Each day to do the best;
Her slender fingers swiftly flew,
To God commend the rest.

She often glanced towards the door,
Because a footstep near
Would seem to linger, but 'twas gone—
Naught but an anxious fear.

One day, when walking through the street,
She saw a gathering crowd;
Ah, surely 'tis his face, his form—
What mean those mutterings loud?

They drag him to a prison cell,
Thus for his deeds to atone;
'Tis justice that the law demands,
Mercy is God's alone.

'Tis strange and wondrous to relate,
A woman's constancy;
Now Fanny dwells without the gate,
A constant watch to keep.

And now a moral I would teach—
My story is quite true;
'Tis character that brings us joy,
Not gold or glittering show.

Poor Fanny's griefs and sorrows here
Through Him were all forgiven;
Our God is good, He will give peace,
And joy and rest in Heaven.

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.

Faith, Hope and Charity,
Dear little sisters three,
With flowing locks and arms entwined,
Stand there in unity.

Faith, with her finger beckoning,
Speaks of a home so pure:
"'Tis there, I know; its lights I see;
God's promises are sure.

"Come, Hope, arise! Away thy fears!
I see a country fair,
Its streets are made of purest gold;
Oh, hasten with me there."

"Dear sister, would that I could see;
My eyes are bright and clear,
But I am fearful lest the way
Should be dark, cold, and drear.

"Here, take my hand—I'll trust to thee;
I know that thou art true;
Thy words, dear Faith, they strengthen me,
The lights are just in view.

"I want to reach the city,
The gates are open wide,
But there's a stream which I must cross
To reach the other side.

"Hark! now I hear the music—
The harps with strings of gold!
Oh, sisters, it is wonderful;
The half has ne'er been told."

. . . . . .

Then Charity, she lifts her voice:
"I, too, would gladly share,
But there seems much for me to do
In this great world of care;
I'll help the poor and needy ones,
I'll suffer for their sakes,
And wait with patience on the road
Till God in kindness takes
Us all into that city,
And in a joyful song,
Of hallelujahs to the King
We'll join the white-robed throng.
There we may sing forever,
We shall know each other, too;
Now Faith and Hope," said Charity,
"I bid a kind adieu."

THE FIREMEN.

[*Clang! Clang! Clang!*]

HARK! Upon the midnight air
The firemen's ponderous bell,
With its clang! clang! clang!
Which sounds almost a knell.

See the hurry of the firemen,
With their engines, hose, and reel;
Ready, steady, with their brave hearts,
Naught of terror do they feel.

Look! yon windows flames are bursting,
Smoke that reaches to the sky!
Hark! the captain's voice is calling:
"Bring the ladder—throw it high."

Higher, higher, still they raise it,
But the fire is surging past
Like a burning, seething cauldron—
Terrible! Will all be lost?

Now the men are working bravely,
One by one they grasp a rung,
When the captain cries, "Too late, boys!"
Looking upwards, back he sprung.

Oh! such horror, consternation—
Noise like thunder hear the roar!
"Where's our comrades? Boys, they're under!
See the walls have fallen o'er."

Soon they clear away the debris,
Lift him tenderly, hear the groans:
"Captain, I have done my duty,"
Said he, feebly, 'twixt the moans.

So they gently bore him homeward:
Ah, poor mother!—sweetheart, too!
God looks down in his compassion;
Tenderly He'll care for you.

OUR BABY.

Little one, pretty one,
Now I think of thee,
With your little dimpled cheeks,
Sitting on my knee.

With your little eyes so bonnie,
And your mouth so saucy, too;
Toothless as a little dolly—
Kiss you?—Yes, I must, and do.

Little hands with taper fingers,
Little arms so plump and round,
Little neck so small and slender,
Ears to catch each merry sound.

Little feet with ten pink toes
Peep from under cover;
Little legs that try to walk
The bright new carpet over.

Now, you lovely, little, wee thing,
As the days do come and go,
We will pray a Christlike spirit
In your mind and heart may grow.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

Our baby boy the other day
  Brought me an invitation,—
A little green square envelope,
  And with this intimation:
"Please grandma, mamma, papa, too,
  My teacher said to me;
Please come to school on Friday eve,
  And see our Christmas tree."

On Friday eve we went in haste
  To see the preparation;
We found the children seated there
  'Midst wondrous decoration;
The room festooned in many ways,
  And in the midst a star,
To tell them why 'twas Christmas,
  And of wise men from afar.

The Christmas tree was very tall,
  And hung all o'er with toys,
And pretty candles here and there,
  Which pleased the girls and boys.

The little children sang their songs
And gave their recitations,
And bowed and curtsied to us all
Amidst loud acclamations.

And then old Santa Claus appeared,
With sleigh bells loudly ringing,
Which told the children, one and all,
That presents he was bringing.
So round the room he quickly ran—
His white locks they were flying;
He said it was a busy time—
The children they were spying.
So good-bye, Mister Santa Claus,
And good-bye, teacher, too;
With a very Merry Christmas
And Happy New Year to you.

LITTLE FOUR-YEAR-OLD.

I stood without a station door
To watch the passers-by.
Now some were rich and others poor,
But one and all did try
To catch a train for east or west.
The conductor's voice was loud,
This train for north and that for south
He called amidst the crowd.
I scanned their faces searchingly,
If possible, to gain
A lesson from this motley crowd
That were hurrying to a train.
And soon I saw a maiden stand,
Beside her leaned a boy,
A tiny little four-year-old—
His eyes beamed full of joy;
He looked enquiringly in her face,
Saying, "I don't like to come
To see the train when they go 'way;
Only when they come home."
This little child of four years old
Had learned 'tis sad to part,
And with tender love for babyhood
His words had reached my heart.

WHAT DRANDMA'S DOT.

When walking slowly down the street
I met a prattling baby boy,
His head erect and toddling feet,
His eyes were sparkling, full of joy.

I asked him why he thus had strayed
Away from home, this little tot;
He looked indignant—"Don't you know?
I'm doin' to see what drandma's dot."

"CHARITY."

"Charity, charity—what is charity?"

"CHARITY vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,"
Saith the preacher wise;
With humble heart and gentle mien
Towards the poor he cries.

I asked a pretty maiden fair,
"What is this Charity?"
"To give our money for the poor,
And thus their wants supply."

I asked a youth of stalwart form,
"What is this Charity?"
He looked amazed, and on me gazed
In great perplexity.

I asked a woman of the world,
"What is this Charity?"
"With fancy balls in stately halls,
I have no time to see."

I asked a man of worldly fame,
"What is this Charity?"
"While seeking honor, gaining wealth,
It did not trouble me."

I asked a man of placid brow,
"What is this Charity?"
"To do to others as I would
That they should do to me."
This only answer do I find —
This is true Charity.

WINTER.

Hark! the wintry winds are blowing,
Cold and stormy is the blast;
Now we see the tiny snowflakes,
Wildly hurrying, chasing past.

See! they're flying past the window,
Now they're drifting by the door;
Fighting, wrestling, never weary,
Shrieking, moaning o'er and o'er.

Here we see a tiny hillock,
There it drifts to mountains high;
Oh, those white and sparkling snowflakes,
Numerous as the sands of sea.

We behold each dainty prism—
Square, triangle, round or small—
With its filigree, feathery border,
Floating, flying, one and all.

See! 'tis falling gently downward,
  Soon 'tis whirling round and round;
Jumping, leaping, always restless,
  When the wind with thee is found.

Tell us why this hurly-burly,
  Why this tumult, busy bustle?
Why so stormy and tempestuous?
  Why this hasty, fitful hustle?

Methinks you have a kindly purpose,
  To our earth you softly come,
Covering all its imperfections,
  With your warm and feathery down.

SABBATH EVENING.

We thank thee, Heavenly Father,
For another Sabbath day,
With its holy inspirations,
That will help us on our way.

We have heard this day from Holy Writ,
"Whosoever will may come,"
And have salvation free to all,
Christ did for all atone.

Lo, God sends forth his prophet,
Who, with a trumpet sound,
Calls, "Ho! every one that thirsteth,
Ye to the waters come.

"Come he that hath no money,
Come ye, buy wine and milk;
Why spend your money on the bread
Which satisfieth not?"

But still we linger on the way,
And ask the reason why,
Should we this bread and water need—
The world has its supply.

We may eat the bread of idleness,
And live in fashion's bower,
And drink the wine of carelessness—
Thus build a mighty tower

Of unbelief in Christ the Son,
And all things good and true,
For Satan finds such willing hands
His mischief thus to do.

Hearken to me, and ye shall eat,
And let your soul delight,
For blest the man who hungers thus,
And thirsts with all his might

For righteousness—we shall be filled,
Our mouth shall utter praise
For all thy goodness, oh my God,
Through everlasting days.

LIFE.

WHAT is Life? 'Tis like a book
  Of many pages through;
Each day we write a letter there
  Of happiness or woe.

What is Life? 'Tis like a dream,
  A surging of the soul
For things immortal, still unseen,
  Yet searching for a goal.

What is Life? 'Tis but a heart
  Its life blood pulsing here;
Stop but a moment, all is still—
  Not life but death is there.

What is life? 'Tis like a field
  To sow, and scatter seed
Of wheat or tares—which shall it be?—
  Our hungry souls to feed.

What is Life? 'Tis like a road
To walk here all alone,
Unless the Christ and Comforter
We seek our sins to atone.

What is Life? 'Tis like a flower
That blossoms in the spring,
Which sunshine strengthens, autumn chills,
But winter death will bring.

What is Life? It is our all.
What more can God bestow
Than everlasting life beyond
And happiness below?

What is Life? 'Tis but a soul
From God to mortal given;
'Tis only sent to earth awhile,
And then called back to heaven.

TO-MORROW.

To-MORROW! to-morrow! Ah, 'tis an evil day
When we leave until to-morrow
What we should do to-day.

To-morrow! to-morrow! It is an idle dream;
A phantom of the day to come;
A myth by us ne'er seen.

To-morrow! yes, to-morrow! Ah, little do we know
What each day called to-morrow
Will bring to me and you.

Then let us live to-day, as to-morrow it should be,
A life of love to God and men
To all eternity.

TO MY CANARY.

Pretty little yellow warbler
  Sitting on your perch,
What matters it to you though
  'Tis cold and blustery March?

You are just as happy,
  Your notes are quite as long,
As though amid the tropics
  You trilled your happy song.

What though your cage is narrow—
  'Tis neatly bent and woven;
Your little throat does swell with joy
  As each round note is taken.

Now tell me, little songster,
  You toil not, neither spin,
What bringeth thee such happiness
  In your little house so trim?

TO MY CANARY

Is it your pretty plumage,
  Your eyes so round and clear;
Your slender limbs so graceful,
  Or wings with which to veer?

"Dear madam, 'tis a secret,
  One which I cannot tell,
Whence cometh all my pretty notes
  That I can sing so well.

"But I am always happy,
  In cage though I'm confined,
And sing to show my gratitude
  Whenever I'm inclined."

TO AN ISLAND IN MUSKOKA.

They call thee Silver Island,
Though thy steep and rocky sides
Are more like mountain glaciers
To our unaccustomed eyes.
Your dark and lonely cottage,
With its door towards the sun,
Which seems to say to passers-by,
"Behold me, every one.

"I once was bright and happy,
Each summer brought to me
Two proud and loving parents
And winsome daughters three.
They sang and danced upon the green,
They ran from tree to tree,
They gathered ferns before the door,
And laughed so merrily.

"And after they went boating,
Or fishing, or with troll—
Muskoka lakes are noted for
Their bass and pickerel.

And oh, they were so happy
And joyous in their glee;
They learned to swim from shore to shore,
Though 'twas a mystery.

"The water was so very deep,
The rocks were mountains high,
Still they, like mermaids of the sea,
Would chant a lullaby.
I never shall forget the day—
'Twas August, bright and clear—
When one dainty little maiden
Plunged in the lake so near.

"They watched to see her rise above
The waters deep and cold,
But no!—she sank to rise no more—
At least, that's what I'm told.
The grass has grown before the door,
The ferns there still are green,
But my dainty little maidens three
I never more have seen.

TO AN OLD SERVANT.

Old, feeble and infirm,
She passed from out the door,
Her steps were slow, her eyes were dim,
But there was nothing more
To tell of years of servitude,
A life of toil and care;
Of humble and submissive strife,
With not a friend to share.
Once she had a mother kind,
Whom she fondled and caressed,
But many long, long years ago
They laid her down to rest,
Away in dear old Ireland,
Beneath its grassy sward,
Where none but strangers mark the spot
And only angels guard.
Methinks I see her pitying eye
Look down upon her child,
And call in accents low and sweet,
"Come home, nor be beguiled.
The world has many pleasures—
To youth 'tis strewn with flowers;

But there's a better country far,
And this we may call ours.
I hear the angels singing—
Their song is of the Lamb,
Their robes are white and beautiful,
And palms are in their hands.
You've had a long, long journey;
Your days are nearly spent;
The road was rough and thorny,
With toil and trials bent.
What though your limbs are tottering,
Your face is old and worn,
Still there's a kindness in your heart
Which comes of God alone.
You have been very dutiful
To parents, brother, friend—
List! now I hear the Master's call,
He will His angels send.

TO THE DANDELION.

Pretty little yellow dandelion,
How I wonder where you've been;
Poking up your slender body
Through the grass you're early seen.

Now I wonder where your eyes are
In your soft and downy head,
While your neck with that green ruffle
On your shoulders nicely spread.

Seems to me your pretty table
Of green leaves so long and round;
Like a lamp you're standing o'er it,
Shedding light from mound to mound.

When you're old I see your white head,
Few and scattered are the hairs,
But the zephyrs waft them gently,
Scattering seed for after years.

PASSING THROUGH THE ROCKIES.

THESE mountain heights who can describe—
We sit in wonder, awe—
Gaze at their towering cliffs, whose peaks
Snow-capped nor nature's law
Of winter's winds, sun's burning ray.
They stand in mighty power,
Smile at the sunset's golden tints,
Nor feel the changing hour.

In solid form of pyramid,
Mason's block, or cathedral spire;
Fantastic-fluted organ pipes,
Whose imagery can inspire
Only thoughts of the Great Eternal One
Who holds all in His hand—
The mountains, seas, the universe—
Still counts the grains of sand.

But man, in likeness of his God,
Has climbed these mountains grand,

Measured their summits by his skill,
  Has wrought, devised and planned,
That now the great leviathan,
  The iron steed of the plain,
Can mount with ease these towering cliffs,
  The valley reach again.

LAKE ONTARIO.

HARK! the sound of restless water
Ever dashing on the shore;
Now it's climbing o'er the pebbles,
Now the sands are washed once more.

When we see you in the distance,
Calm and silent you appear;
Like a glass your face transparent—
Who to look would think of fear?

With color blue the sky reflecting—
Deeper, deeper far, 'tis true—
How you ripple, how you waver,
Lake Ontario, this is you.

But the winds must have a frolic,
See the white caps come and go;
Ah, what merry little hillocks,
Jumping, leaping to and fro.

But the storm is growing furious,
  See the waves they splash and swirl;
Lashed to fury, hear their roaring
  Like to thunder as they whirl.

How they surge and roll and tumble
  Till the shore they reach, and then
Fall exhausted on the breakers,
  On the sands ne'er seen again.

Its fury past, behold the morn—
  The sun sends forth its rays of gold,
Like arrows now they glint and fall,
  And shimmer on thy surface bold.

Not shamefaced but serenely calm,
  I see the laugh at all thy rage;
The day goes by, Old Sol looks down
  Into thy breast like some old sage.

As evening comes he paints thee o'er
  With purple, red and golden hue,
Nor waits to count the colors all—
  For sublime beauty, Lake, 'tis you.

THE BIRDS' NEST.

I WAS sitting alone in my garden
  Where flowers in their beauty abound;
The air was filled with their fragrance,
  All was quiet and never a sound

But the humming of bees 'midst the blossoms—
  Always busy the livelong day—
As they gathered the sweets so abundant,
  And then with a buzz flew away.

I was thinking how all of God's creatures
  Seemed so happy and free from care,
Except man with his trials and troubles,
  Of which we all have our share,

When a bird flew past me so quickly,
  To a very tall tree near by.
I was startled, and thought I would follow,
  When there, 'neath the leaves, met my eye

A nest so cozy, so soft, and so warm,
With four little birdies all tucked in from harm,
With four open mouths, quite ready, we're sure,
To devour every worm mother brings them and more.

I wondered they all seemed so merry and gay,
The mother bird fluttered and fluttered away,
The father was singing a song full of glee,
As he sat on a branch of a neighboring tree.

I visited daily this warm little nest,
The birdies they grew and they grew,
For day after day the mother worked hard
As backward and forward she flew.

But one day I looked in this warm little nest—
There was trouble, yes, trouble indeed,
For each little head hung over the side,
And they cried out for help in their need.

"Oh, mother, dear mother, we'll die we are sure;
There is no place for us to abide;
Our nest is too small, we are sure we shall fall,
And there is no one to help us beside."

"Use your wings, use your wings," the mother replied,
"And try and fly out into space;
Your feathers are grown, your wings are quite strong,
Take courage, for there is your place.

"You must try and fly upwards, for God has so planned
Your pinions to soar upon high,
But to lie in your nest brings you trouble, not rest,
So fly, little birdies—come, fly."

And so 'tis with us: we are troubled and tried,
On this earth we'll not always abide;
We hang down our heads, while our Saviour He pleads,
And shows His dear wounded side.

We must take wings of faith and rise higher and higher—
Our Father will show us the way—
Till, the pearly gates reached, we enter with joy
Everlasting and blissful day.

CANADIAN FLOWERS.

In our grandmothers' time the gallants of old
Sent flowers to their sweethearts, with language so bold
You could read without trouble each bouquet so sweet,
For the flowers were a symbol of his love quite complete.

Now fair Canada has in the field and the wood
Many flowers, though their language is not understood;
The Hepatica bids us good morrow, you know,
Its pink and blue blossoms beside rusty purple leaves
grow.

Trailing arbutus means goodness and virtue to meet,
Requisites so necessary for our joy complete;
A pilgrim he travels all over the land,
In forest and wood with his loud command.

The finely dissected squirrel cornflower
Flings its lace o'er the dry, dead leaves
Of last year; you wonder how perfect its power
To scatter the perfume the hyacinth breathes.

When the spring is quite tender the bloodroot appears,
  Like an Indian he pops up his head,
Surrounded by dogtooth and lilies whose tears
  Fall on violets all covered in bed.

The cardinal flower like a sentinel stands—
  In the dark woodland shadows a light;
So gorgeous its jacket, so straight is its stem,
  You think he's a soldier outright.

Next the columba comes, with its meaning, a dove;
Lady's slippers, the moccasin flower, and above;
The buttercups, called the rich "fairy gold,"
With our feathered pink daisy and dandelion bold.

Then our roses, wild roses, so sweet and so fair,
  Growing in meadow, on roadside, and glen;
The perfumed sweet briar, which tells us beware,
  Ne'er a rose but a thorn in its train.

The columbine, too, is an emblem of folly,
For it hangs out of reach on the rocks near the holly,
And its lovely grey bells are called "the forsaken,"
But for why such a meaning? We must be mistaken.

Then our golden-eyed daisy, or marguerite *élite*—
Who has not counted petals for her lover discreet—
'Tis an evidence of love, with its daisy linked chain,
Since Queen Marguerite of Italy gave this flower her name.

Then next, but not least, comes our jack-in-the-pulpit,
Though modest, all covered with awning so fine;
He stands quite erect, his dignity perfect,
And he'll tie the knot quite sublime.

THE PATHWAY OF LIFE.

THEY had climbed the hill together
For many a long, long year;
The pathway at first seemed all roses,
With never a thorn to fear.
In fancy I again see the springtime
When they started their journey to tread,
Both so earnest and loving and trustful,
All was sunshine with blue sky o'erhead.

But after a time clouds would gather—
It was only a shower by the way;
The violets would bloom more abundant,
With buttercups and daisies, like May.
They ofttimes sat down in an arbor,
To rest on the roadside and plan
Out a future, where none of life's troubles
Could possibly reach if they ran.

So they walked till they sighted a cottage—
It was *home,* so they gladly went in;

Now they fancied no troubles could enter,
For 'twas bolted and barred from within,
The garden was strewn o'er with flowers,
The grass was the brightest of green,
The walks were so winding and cleanly,
Such a paradise they ne'er had seen.

So they lived there for years quite contented,
The children would play round the door;
Their laughter would ring out so joyous,
It thrilled them with delight o'er and o'er.
But by-and-bye in rode a monster,
And carried one out from the rest;
They pleaded and begged him to leave her,
But she said that our Father knew best.

So now then they thought they'd climb higher
The green hills seemed still far away.
For a blight had swooped down o'er the cottage,
Like a shadow that flits with the day.
They climbed up through thicket and jungles,
If perchance the old pathway to find,
But the roses had all turned to brambles—
Their thorns pierced as frozen north wind.

They plunge on and on through the thicket,
While the trumpets of thunder resound;

The crags and the valleys re-echoed
As though some lost spirit were found.
The children were stricken with terror
And faded like flowers by the way,
And drooped and died, tenderly calling,
"Hark! the music; we're tired, or would stay."

They laid them in mounds by the wayside;
On the quivering air ne'er a sound
But the singing of birds, as they warbled
To mates softly, or tripped o'er the ground.
So now, as they climbed to the hill-crest,
Lo, a valley so green down the glade;
They hasten, while yet it is peaceful,
And sunshine breaks forth through the shade.

Behold they have found the old pathway;
The roses are budding again;
'Tis springtime, the earth with rich verdure clad,
And the promise, "Abundance of rain."
See the kindness of our Great Creator—
If we knew of the care and the strife,
We would falter and faint ere we started,
Nor dare climb up the pathway of life.

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Memoires and other poems

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